

# HAMILTON AWARD

## 2008 Award Winner: B/2-138 FA

**B**Battery, 2nd Battalion, 138th Field Artillery (B/2-138 FA), Kentucky Army National Guard (ARNG), based in Carlisle, won the Hamilton Best ARNG Battery Award for 2008. Captain Robert S. Mattingly commands the battery with NCO leader First Sergeant Harold G. Davis.

Named for Alexander Hamilton, a Revolutionary War Artilleryman and American statesman, the Hamilton Award was established in 2002. It annually recognizes a high-performing ARNG battery based on specific criteria and a narrative. (For more information, see the "Knox, Hamilton and Gruber Awards" link at <http://sill-www.army.mil/awards/default.htm>.)

B/2-138 FA was mobilized 2 June 2007, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). B Battery is an FA unit with 84 Soldiers, but its assigned mission to provide convoy security for theater and corps level assets required 169 Soldiers. The unit quickly built a team with Soldiers who volunteered from more than 20 different units and from 52 of the 120 counties in Kentucky. Because B Battery was deploying for a nonstandard mission, women also were allowed to join for the first time in the history of the unit.

**Deployed.** Upon arrival in Iraq, B/2-138 FA managed the largest convoy security element within the largest sustainment battalion in theater, providing the battalion with six organic patrols and one patrol made up of Soldiers from a regular Army unit under the unit's operational control. B/2-138 FA provided security for logistical missions that supported Coalition Warfighters within MultiNational Divisions, Baghdad (MND-B), North (MND-N), Central and Southeast.

B Battery provided up to 65 percent of the combat power of the 1103rd Combat Service Support Battalion (CSSB), which in turn was the main effort for sustaining operations in MND-B area of operations (AO). At its peak, the 1103rd CSSB provided support to 19 maneuver brigades, and B Battery ensured that these assets arrived at their intended destinations safely and in a timely manner.

**Accomplishments.** B Battery was the most heavily committed security company within the brigade. The unit

had 49 three-Soldier crews capable of providing seven convoy logistical patrols to the battalion. The Soldiers' constant desire to improve led to the refinement of several battalion tactics, techniques and procedures. As a result, B Battery successfully executed 140 missions, drove 299,538 miles and left the forward operating base 1,050 times. During this time, the unit was tasked with several high-profile security missions and proved to be a key component of sustainment operations within the MultiNational Corps, Iraq (MNC-I).

B Battery was instrumental in escorting more than 680,000 gallons of fuel between locations to increase Class III stocks in preparation for Ramadan. The battery was a major force in the operational move of an Iraqi battalion from Taji to Basra. The unit participated in multiple missions to move Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles, including three missions to Mosul to provide the MND-N commander with the new Maxx-pro MRAP.

Perhaps the biggest contribution the unit made was in supporting numerous missions to emplace concrete barriers in support of new combat outposts and safe neighborhood projects, in particular the "Safe Road" mission in the 2-82 Brigade Combat Team operational environment. These missions were in the most dangerous areas of Iraq, and security was frequently the sole responsibility of the gun trucks in that area. Every logistical

asset committed to B Battery's care reached its intended destination.

**Adverse Conditions.** Despite the loss of two of its Soldiers within eight days of each other and with five Soldiers wounded in action, B Battery continued the mission at hand. It logged more than 14,000 miles a week during the following three weeks and completed 14 additional missions, showing its mettle under the most adverse conditions.

Throughout this time, B Battery convoys were the subject of numerous attacks by anti-Iraqi and anti-Coalition forces. These attacks included five improvised explosive device (IED) strikes, five positively identified IEDs, one explosively formed penetrator attack, 10 indirect-fire incidents, 21 small-arms attacks, one rocket propelled grenade attack and one complex attack. The unit reacted in accordance with the prescribed rules of engagement at all times and mitigated the damage to 1103rd CSSB assets.

B Battery set the standard for convoy security units during OIF 07-09. The tremendous success of the unit in supporting the main effort of the MND-B can not be understated in regard to the overall success in the area of operations. Despite the demanding, diverse and ever-evolving missions, B/2-138 FA met every challenge and never lost a single logistical asset that was committed to its protection. The Soldiers of this unit are of the finest in the Army inventory, their dedication and professionalism bring credit to their unit and the US Army.



B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 138th Field Artillery, Kentucky Army National Guard (Photo courtesy of 1st Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs Office)